

School-Community Advisory Council

What is it?

A School Health Advisory Council is a body of individuals that coordinate, develop, and/or advise on the services, programs, and strategies used by a school to address the health and well-being of students and staff and their families.

The elements of this component are as follows:

- Clear sense of mission and role—Members need to understand and accept their role as advisory to the school board and administration on issues related to prevention, health and wellness, and youth development. Possible issues that could be addressed by the council are policy, budget, service delivery, and evaluation.
- Multi-culturally sensitive—The membership of the advisory council should reflect the diversity of the community. Council representation should reflect the ethnic, gender, religious, age, socio-economic, handicap, and other differences that exist within the community that the school serves.
- Multi-disciplinary inclusive—Drawing from the skills and interests of the community is essential in selecting members of the advisory council than can best serve its identified needs. Education, health care, human service, law enforcement, clergy, business and industry, parent and student representatives should all be included.

Contribution

The unique contribution that this component makes to the overall framework is in the ability of the advisory council to connect and coordinate the efforts of everyone working towards the positive development of youth, their health and wellness, and the prevention of youth risk behaviors. The advisory council can provide long range program planning, enhance communication between service providers from a variety of disciplines, represent diverse points of view, and increase the potential resources and impacts on problems.